

[Cult Lore]

Beliefs and customs; cults

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK 6 Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Levi C. Hubert

ADDRESS 353 West 118th ST. New York City

DATE November 14, 1938

SUBJECT CULT LORE - (FATHER DIVINE)

1. Date and time of interview Saturday Nov. 12, 1938
2. Place of interview 2539 -8th Ave. Man. A Cafe operated for the Peace Movement
3. Name and address of informant
Brother Allpeace Littlejohn, 2539 -8th Ave.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc,

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This eating place is operated by Mr. Littlejohn. Members of the Peace Movement act as cooks, waiters, and pantry help. The prices are lower than in other cafes, no smoking is allowed and the service is poor.

The workers are liable at any time to break out in song, and a distinct religious atmosphere can be noted.

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NEW YORK

FORM B Personal History of Informant

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Levi C. Hubert

ADDRESS 353 W. 118th St. New York

DATE Nov. 14, 1938

SUBJECT CULT LORE - (FATHER DIVINE)

1. Ancestry
2. Place and date of birth
3. Family
4. Places lived in, with dates
5. Education, with dates

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6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates

7. Special skills and interests

8. Community and religious activities

9. Description of informant

10. Other Points gained in interview

58 years old, a member of the Father Divine Movement. Operates restaurants, A grocery store, and a rooming house. Does not smoke, chew, nor drink. As against the teachings of Father Divine. Became interested in the movement about Eight years ago and since then has adhered strictly to the Divine theory that sexual intercourse is an abomination That idea, incidently, has been the cause of many homes being broken up in the city. The Spoken Word, of which mention is made in the interview, is a magazine published weekly by the Divinites, which contains every word spoken by Father Divine and faithfully recorded by Mr. Lamb, his secretary. The gage as set down here is approximate, since Mr. Littlejohn feels that in disregarding the outside works, its measurements and computations should be forgotten. He feels that he was born when he was converted to Father Divine. And since that event, he is ageless because "I am a part of the "immortality of Father Divine"

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NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

STATE NEW YORK

NAME OF WORKER Levi C. Hubert

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ADDRESS 353 W. 118th St. New York

DATE Nov. 14, 1938

SUBJECT CULT LORE - FATHER DIVINE)

"Peace." This, the universal slogan of the Father Divine Movement, was spoken quietly by Mr. Singleton in response to my greeting.

The formalities gotten over with, Mr. Singleton agreed with me that many stories had grown up and around the person of Father Divine.

Said Mr. Singleton:

"As far back as 1931, when father Divine had established a Heaven in Sayville, Long Island, the people of the world told and retold stories which were founded on first hand evidence as well as on hearsay.

Every Sunday in 1931 it was the custom of "The Father" to invite Harlemites out to the "Heaven" and sit them around the festive board and allow them the use of the many automobiles in the "Father's" garage.

One of the visitors, a young girl of about 20, had begged a ride out to Sayville. She sat down at the table and ate a large meal, good wholesome food, which she admitted had become rather hard to get in Harlem, what with the depression and bein unemployed. The 2 Father noticed this young girl and spoke to her.

"My child, would you like to stay here for a few weeks and enjoy the blessings of Heaven?"

"Father, I would be delighted."

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Father had one of the arch angels escort the young girl upstairs after dinner and when she reached room set aside for her she found shoes, stockings, a dress, and underthings, all new and exactly her size, laid out on the bed.

The arch angel smiled and said "Aint it wonderful."

The girl asked, "Are these clothes for me?"

"Yes. The Father, who knows everything, is aware of the sorry time you are having and it was he who put it in your mind to come out here. Now that you are here, he will see that you want for nothing as long as you believe, Aint it Wonderful?"

"It is truly wonderful," said the amazed girl.

The Evil One got into the folks of Sayville about this time and the police of Sayville arrested the entire household one Saturday night, most of us were held on a charge of disorderly conduct but the Father was charged with maintaining a disorderly house and held for the action of the court.

When the judge asked us whether we had made loud noises and created a disturbance, we sang hymns in the courtroom and said that it was true that we were rejoicing in the favor of the Father and being glad would only disturb unbelievers.

The judge charged us \$10 and cost, each one of except the Father. The judge said that he would have to have a trial and stay in jail until that time.

The Father paid our fines and when the police made us leave the courthouse, the Father said, "My children. I will watch over the faithful. It is part of my will that I stay in jail but I'll only stay here as long as I will it. So, go home, and everything will be all right, Peace".

"We all shouted, "Peace. Peace." and went our way.

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Father was put in a cell remained quiet all night but when the keeper came in the morning with the coarse prison food, the Father wouldn't touch it. He had the keeper take the tray away.

"But, remember, "The keeper said, "You get nothing else to eat." Father said, "Peace" and immediately a beautiful breakfast appeared.

The keeper passed the cell and was amazed to see the father eating fresh eggs and ham with coffee. We were in the heaven gathered around our breakfast table and Father's place was set as usual and Father came to the table and blessed the food for us to eat. The Father can be any and all places at one and the same time.

When the father was convicted, the judge didn't sentence him right away because he knew what had happened to two other judges who did that and died suddenly. So sure 'nough, the Sunday before the judge handed down a writ of doubt and since then the case has never been brought to trail. The power of the Father is too well known to chance anyone fooling with it.

The Father does not allow gum to be chewed by his followers, no smoking, and the hair must not be straightened, but must be as natural as it was ordained.

Anyone who violates the teachings of the Father is bound to feel the anger of the Father, but those who believe in him are sure to have his blessings fall down upon them.

I remember the woman who was helped by believing in the 4 Father. She was without work, had no money, and the landlord was about to disposess her. Her so-called friends had abandoned her and in her hour of need there was no one to turn to; no one, that is, but to the Father. She had heard of his doings and now that her sorrow was great, she prayed for help to the Father.

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She was in her almost empty apartment, down on her knees, asking for the Father to bring her strength and safety.

It has been told me, and I have no reason to doubt it, that out of a hole in the wall a rat brought two fifty dollar bills, which he laid at the poor woman's feet. Her troubles were over and I feel certain that the Father was the one responsible for the money sent her.

I know because a few years ago I was unable to get work and today, with the help of the Father, I have a restaurant where the people can get good food at a reasonable price. No one is turned away if he doesn't have the money. I also have a grocery store where the everyday necessities of life can be purchased much cheaper than elsewhere.

All the money I make goes to keep up the good work of Father Divine. I sell The Spoken Word, in which is recorded every word spoken by the Father to his children. In this way I do my share and show my gratitude to the Father for his many blessings.

Do you remember last summer? Those hot days were a warning to the people of the world that he was still watching and taking into account all the many things said against him.

Father doesn't allow any of his children to go on relief and if any of them have ever been on relief Father makes them pay back all the money they ever got.

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Sure, some people have died in the Heaven. But they have been without faith. Perhaps they had faith for a while but Father would not have allowed them to die if they still believe in him.

Faithful Mary was sick and living in sin when Father took pity in the goodness of his heart and made her well and let her live in Heaven with him. She tired of the happy way and went off with money which she had been keeping for the children. But she didn't really hurt Father because he is above such things.

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Roosevelt will be the last president. After him will come the Divine Executive who will rule the world properly and all Father's children will once more live in Heaven. There will be peace in all the world.